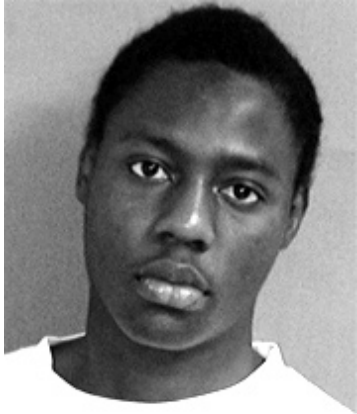


**INSIDE TODAY**

**U.S. NEWS**

**AIRLINE ATTACK**



This Dec. 2009 photo released by the U.S. Marshal's Service shows Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab in Milan, Mich. A grand jury indicted Abdulmutallab on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2010 on charges accusing him of attempting to blow up a Detroit-bound Northwest Airlines plane on Christmas Day by trying to use a weapon of mass destruction.

*Read more on Page A5*

**SPORTS NEWS**

**HIGH TIDE**



Alabama running back Mark Ingram (22) celebrates after Alabama defensive lineman Marcell Dareus' (57) touchdown during the second quarter of the BCS Championship NCAA college football game in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010.

*Read more on Page A13*

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Norris Brown, left, gathers his things after being the second to last of 29 cars to pile up near Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010, in Atlanta.  
 Associated Press

*Read more on Page 3*

# U.S., Arabs press for shift in Mideast peace talks

MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration on Friday laid out a bold shift in its Mideast peace strategy, stepping up pressure on Israel and the Palestinians to resume stalled talks by moving immediately to negotiations on the toughest issues dividing them, like the borders of a Palestinian state and the status of Jerusalem. On its face, a move to tackle those two defining and difficult issues that Israel has long refused to budge on would appear to be a major turnaround in long-standing



Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Jordan's Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh, shake hands at the State Department in Washington, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010.

*Associated Press*

American policy to push progress.

*Continued on Next Page*



FILE - In this Sept. 1, 2008 file photo, then-Democratic vice presidential candidate, Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., talks with his mother, Jean, during a visit of his childhood home in Scranton, Pa. Biden's 92-year-old mother has died after becoming seriously ill in recent days.

*Associated Press*

## VP Biden's 92-year-old mother dies

By RANDALL CHASE

Associated Press Writer

Randall Chase, Associated Press Writer — 18 mins ago  
 WILMINGTON, Del. — Jean Biden, who raised her son Vice President Joe Biden to believe in what he called "America's creed ... everyone is your equal," died Friday after falling seriously ill in recent days. She was 92.

In a statement, the vice president said she died in Wilmington surrounded by her family and loved ones. She had suffered a broken hip in a fall in March 2009.

*Continued on Page 4*

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Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton shakes hands with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Ali Aboul Gheit, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010, at the State Department in Washington, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010.

*Associated Press*

## MIDEAST PEACE TALKS Continued from Front Page

But U.S. officials stressed that the shift does not abandon the administration's comprehensive approach to peace and said their overall aim is get the parties beyond daily disagreements and back to the negotiating table, where all issues would be discussed. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Friday that dealing with those matters first would eliminate Palestinian concerns about continued construction of Jewish settlements in disputed areas.

After a meeting at the State Department, Clinton and Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh called for negotiations to begin as soon

as possible and be bound by deadlines.

"Resolving borders resolves settlements, resolving Jerusalem resolves settlements," Clinton said. "I think we need to lift our sights and instead of being looking down at the trees, we need to look at the forest."

Peace efforts in the past have tended to focus on broader issues, including Israeli settlements, the fate of Palestinian refugees, and water, with the even more contentious matters like borders and Jerusalem being left for so-called "final status" talks.

Previous attempts to concentrate on the larger issues have ended in failure, notably the 2000 Camp

David talks shepherded by former President Bill Clinton. At the end of the Clinton administration and through the eight years that George W. Bush occupied the White House, U.S. officials shot for nuanced progress on more modest matters.

On Friday, Judeh lent support to the new U.S. tack. "If you resolve the question of borders then you automatically resolve not only settlements and Jerusalem but you identify the nature on the ground of the two-state solution and (what) it looks like," Judeh said.

Both Clinton and Judeh spoke out against new Israeli housing construction in East Jerusalem, which the Palestinians claim as their capital, saying it was damaging to the process.

Their comments came as the Obama administration's special Mideast peace envoy George Mitchell prepares to visit Europe next week and Israel and the Palestinian territories later this month to try to relaunch stalled negotiations.

Mitchell will visit Paris and Brussels first to build support for the approach from European officials.

When he travels to the region, Mitchell is expected to be carrying letters of "guarantees" outlining the U.S. position.

The letters are likely to contain gestures to both sides. For the Palestinians, that would

include criticism of settlements and the belief that the borders that existed before the 1967 Arab-Israeli War should be the basis of a future peace deal.

For the Israelis, they would acknowledge that post-1967 demographic changes on the ground must be taken into account, meaning that Israel would be able to keep some settlements.

Clinton did not address the letters in her remarks. But she said the administration wanted a resolution that meets both the Palestinian goal of a clearly defined and viable state based on the borders that existed before the 1967 war "with agreed swaps" and the Israeli goal of security within boundaries that "reflect subsequent developments."

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas set several conditions for resuming peace talks, including a complete halt to settlement activity. He wants the talks to pick up where they left off in 2008, under Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's more pragmatic predecessor, Ehud Olmert, and be based on the pre-1967 lines.

Abbas has repeatedly said he won't return to talks without a settlement freeze and if he relents now, it might further hurt his standing among Palestinians who are increasingly skeptical about peace efforts. However, he

could present U.S. support for holding the talks based on the pre-1967 borders as a major achievement.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat was not optimistic Friday about the new tack.

"You cannot have discussions on borders while the territory you want to set up your state on is being eaten up by the settlements," Erekat said.

"We are awaiting the arrival of Sen. Mitchell, and we hope the U.S. administration will go on the path of the end game. What we need are decisions now on the end game, on the borders," he said.

But Netanyahu insists Jerusalem is not up for negotiations and must remain under Israeli sovereignty. He already lost ground with hawkish coalition partners by agreeing to curb settlement construction in the West Bank.

After meeting Judeh, Clinton held similar talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit and intelligence chief Omar Suleiman.

"We are coming to try to regenerate enough energy and to create enough momentum for a peace effort and it is crucial that we would win," Aboul Gheit said.

Egypt and Jordan are essential to the peace push as they are Israel's only Arab neighbors to have fully recognized the Jewish state. □



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# Icy hazards persist through U.S., deep into South

By KATE BRUMBACK  
Associated Press Writers

ATLANTA—The unyielding cold spell gripping much of the nation was expected to hang on tight over the weekend, though some areas that saw snowfall during the week were expected to have drier weather.

In Atlanta, more accustomed to winter temperatures in the low 50s, a glaze of ice coated roads Friday after light snow overnight melted and froze. And authorities said the continuing freeze called for renewed caution on the roadways.

Nearly 30 cars piled up in a pre-dawn crash near Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

"I wanted to stay home today, but my boss never called me back, so I thought I should try to get in," said Beth Ament, 30, who was fueling her car so she could get to a nearby transit station to take the train to her job in downtown Atlanta.

In Alabama, packed shelters brought out extra cots and opened doors for people fearful of the deadly cold.

"You have to be inside the way it is now. If you're not, they'll find you stiff," said Elizabeth Austin, a homeless woman who sought warmth at an inner-city Birmingham church.

Multiple deaths have been blamed on this week's cold, including a 44-year-old man whose body was found face-down in the snow early Friday in Billings, Mont.

In Ohio, a winter storm warning was in effect until Saturday morning. That's on top of the snow that had

already coated Interstate 70, where a tractor-trailer spun out of control Thursday, crossed the median and swerved into oncoming traffic, colliding with a small bus transporting adult disabled passengers, the Ohio Highway Patrol said.

Three passengers on the bus were killed, as was its driver. Six other passengers on the bus, which was carrying 11 people, were injured, as was the driver of the commercial truck, Sgt. Raymond Durant said.

Schools in at least 10 states were closed, as were many roads and government offices.

The National Weather Service said 5 to 7 inches of snow was expected Friday across western Pennsylvania. In Pittsburgh and the surrounding areas, it had snowed every day since New Year's, a stretch that meteorologists say is unusual.

Travel was beginning to return to normal Friday at Chicago's airports, after a storm that dumped about 8 inches of snow. The Chicago Department of Aviation said there were still minor delays at O'Hare International Airport because crews had to deice aircraft before they could take off.

Some Nebraska cities were cut off because highways leading in and out of town were blocked or all but impassable.

Amtrak announced that its train between Chicago and Denver wouldn't operate Friday because of blowing and drifting snow in Nebraska.



Snowfall was heaviest in Minnesota and parts of South Dakota, where some drifts were too big for snowplow drivers to clear. Nowhere was it colder than in Bismarck, N.D., where wind chills hit 52 below zero Thursday and the temperature reached 14 below. Wind chills were still near 50 below in the Dakotas on Friday.

While North Dakotans get plenty of practice bundling up, folks in other parts of the country were still learning the basics.

In Mobile, Ala., hit by a rare arctic chill on the coast, Salvation Army spokesman Stacey Killingsworth said shelters were "filled to the brim." One that normally holds up to 28 homeless men a night has been

averaging 115 in recent days, she said.

"We don't turn anyone away, including women and children. We've used cots and mats. We've put people in the auditorium and hallways," she said.

In Florida's Panhandle, vapor was rising off the

Gulf as warm water met the frigid air.

"It's so cold that sparrows that have crawled under the plastic on our heated deck don't want to leave," said Scooter Montgomery, manager of Peg Leg Pete's Oyster Bar on Pensacola Beach. □

## Good News

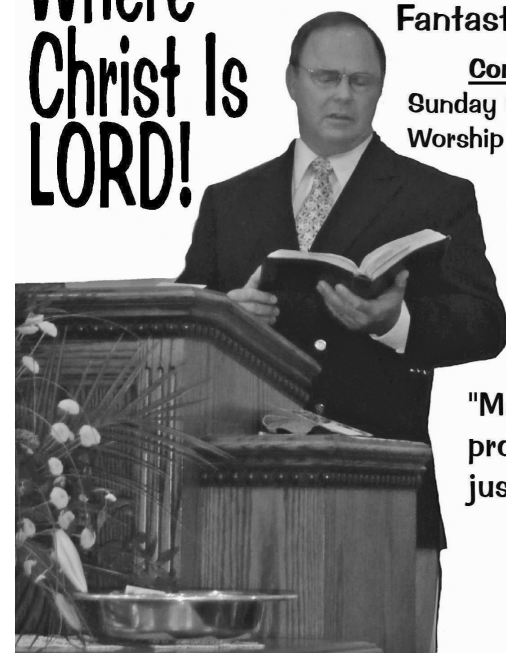
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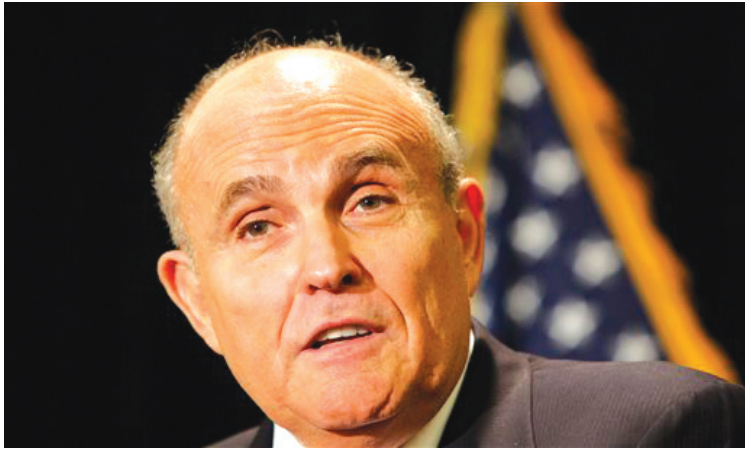


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# Ex-NYC mayor: U.S. avoided terrorism under Bush



In this Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009 picture, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani announces he won't run for New York state governor but instead endorsed Republican Rick Lazio during a news conference in New York.

*Associated Press*

**WILL LESTER**

**Associated Press Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani set off a tempest about terrorism Friday with his claim that the United States “had no domestic attacks” under President George W. Bush. Giuliani somehow neglected to mention the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks in his own city as he contrasted President Barack Obama’s handling of terror cases with that of Bush in light of the failed Christmas Day attempt by a passenger

to blow up a U.S.-bound flight. The Sept. 11 attacks toppled New York’s World Trade Center, killed nearly 3,000 people in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania and earned Giuliani accolades as “America’s mayor.”

The Republican said of Democrat Obama on ABC’s “Good Morning America” that “what he should be doing is following the right things that Bush did.”

While saying he believes Obama “turned the corner” on understanding the nature of terrorism when he publicly

declared the United States at war, Giuliani added that Obama has plenty of room to improve on terror.

“We had no domestic attacks under Bush,” Giuliani said. “We’ve had one under Obama.”

That statement set off waves of protest in the blogosphere. It also echoed a recent claim by former Bush press secretary Dana Perino. GOP strategist Mary Matalin also recently said the Bush administration

“inherited the most tragic attack on our soil in our nation’s history,” implying that the 9/11 attacks resulted from mistakes by the previous Democratic administration of President Bill Clinton.

Bush replaced Clinton in the White House on Jan. 20, 2001, or almost nine months before the al-Qaida sponsored attacks.

When Giuliani was questioned later Friday about his statement, he explained to

CNN’s Wolf Blitzer that he misspoke.

“I usually say we had no domestic attacks, no major domestic attack under President Bush since Sept. 11,” he said. He said after all the warnings of more attacks that came immediately after Sept. 11, many were surprised that this country avoided another major terror attack. Giuliani said: “I did omit the words ‘since Sept. 11.’ I apologize for that.” □

**Continued from Front Page**

“Together with my father, her husband of 61 years who passed away in 2002, we learned the dignity of hard work and that you are defined by your sense of honor,” he said in the statement. “Her strength, which was immeasurable, will live on in all of us.”

Joe Biden Jr. was first elected to the Senate in 1972, shortly before his 30th birthday. His mother helped out by organizing coffee klatches — part of a family effort that also included Biden’s father, sister and brothers.

“Those of you who have met my mom, you know she’s fairly politically astute, and she still runs the show,” the vice president quipped shortly after she fell last year. “You think I’m joking? I’m not,” he said.

The former Catherine Eugenia Finnegan was born July 7, 1917, in Scranton, Pa. In 1941, she married businessman Joseph Biden Sr., with whom she had four children. The couple moved from Scranton to Claymont, Del., in 1953, when their eldest son, Joe, was 10 years old. Joseph Biden Sr. died in 2002 at age 86.

According to Biden’s 2007 autobiography, “Promises to Keep,” his mother had some reservations about whether he should risk a promising career as a young lawyer to enter politics.

“You’re not going to run for Senate and ruin your reputation, are you?” he recalled his mother asking.

“And once Mom was reassured that my future was safe, win or lose, she would do anything,” Biden wrote. □



**FILE** - In this Aug. 27, 2008 file photo, then-Democratic vice presidential nominee Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., is joined by his mother, Catherine Eugenia “Jean” Biden on stage after speaking at the Democratic National Convention in Denver. Biden’s 92-year-old mother has died after becoming seriously ill in recent days.

*Associated Press*

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# Christmas airline terror suspect pleads not guilty

DAVID RUNK,  
ED WHITE

Associated Press Writers

DETROIT (AP)—A Nigerian man accused of trying to ignite an explosive on a Detroit-bound U.S. airliner on Christmas appeared before a judge for the first time Friday, against a backdrop of protesters who stood outside the courthouse waving American flags and denouncing acts of terror. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab's arraignment was brief — less than five minutes — and a not guilty plea was entered on his behalf. He said little, telling the judge simply that he understood the charges against him.

At least one passenger from Northwest Airlines flight 253 watched the hearing from the court benches. Hebba Aref, a Detroit area native who sat six rows in front of Abdulmutallab on the plane, said she came because the attack "changed my life."

Aref, who drew international attention in 2008 after being refused a seat directly behind then-presidential candidate Barack Obama at a Detroit rally because she was wearing a headscarf, said she just wanted to see Abdulmutallab again.

She said she wants him to be "tried by the system" but also is concerned about what his case could mean.

It's the "whole ideology out there that's radical and misuses a beautiful religion," she said. "That's what needs to be dealt with and deterred. ... He's just a small part of it."

Authorities say the 23-year-old Nigerian with al-Qaida links was traveling to Detroit from Amsterdam when he tried to destroy the plane carrying nearly 300 people by injecting chemicals into a package of

explosives concealed in his underwear. The failed attack caused popping sounds and flames that passengers and crew rushed to extinguish.

Obama considers the Christmas attack an attempted strike against the United States by an affiliate of al-Qaida. He also has said the government had information that could have stopped Abdulmutallab, but intelligence agencies failed to connect the dots.

A grand jury indicted him earlier this week on six charges. The most serious — attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction — could land Abdulmutallab in prison for life if convicted.

During Friday's arraignment, Abdulmutallab, who wore a white T-shirt, tennis shoes and a chain shackle at his ankles, stood at the podium and answered questions in English from U.S. Magistrate Judge Mark A. Randon.

He said "yes" when asked if he understood the charges against him and said he had taken "some pain pills" after the judge inquired whether he had taken any drugs or alcohol in the past 24 hours. Abdulmutallab, who is being held at a federal prison in Milan, Michigan, had been treated at a hospital for burns after the attack.

His attorneys then waived the reading of the indictment, and Randon entered the not-guilty plea. It is routine practice in federal court for the defendant to allow the judge to enter a plea rather than say anything himself.

His defense attorney, Miriam Siefer, also did not challenge the government's request to keep Abdulmutallab in pre-trial custody.

U.S. investigators have said Abdulmutallab told



them he received training and instructions from al-Qaida operatives in Yemen. His father warned the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria that his son had drifted into extremism in Yemen, but that threat was never fully digested by the U.S. security apparatus.

Obama's counterterrorism adviser, John Brennan, has said Abdulmutallab would be offered a plea deal in exchange for valuable information about his contacts in Yemen and elsewhere.

After the hearing, one of his attorneys, Leroy Soles, declined to talk about the case.

"It's just too soon in the process to make any comment," Soles said at a nearby coffee shop. The date of the next hearing was not set.

Maryam Uwais, a lawyer in Nigeria, and Mahmud Kazaure, a lawyer from Maryland, told The Associated Press that they were sent by Abdulmutallab's family to observe the hearing. Neither have a role in the case, but both spoke briefly with the suspect's legal team. They

declined to further comment. Earlier in the day, authorities set up metal barricades outside the courthouse and limited foot traffic in the area. A protester stood holding a sign that read: "No U.S. Rights For Terrorists."

About 50 men and women identifying themselves as Detroit-area Muslims chanted "We are Americans"

as they marched behind metal barricades outside the courthouse to denounce terrorism. About a dozen of them carried U.S. flags or signs with messages such as "Not in the name of Islam."

Four Muslims who were part of the protest performed Friday prayers in the court's small museum located on the first floor. □

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## Venezuela devalues currency for 1st time since '05



Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez gestures during the inauguration of the new state-run bank Banco Bicentenario at Miraflores presidential palace in Caracas, Monday, Dec. 21, 2009. The government shut down eight banks in recent weeks and has reopened four of them as part of the state banking system.

*Associated Press*

IAN JAMES

Associated Press Writer

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— President Hugo Chavez announced a currency devaluation Friday for the first time since 2005, setting a two-tiered exchange rate designed to help Venezuela's oil earnings go farther domestically while holding down prices of priority imports like food to counter soaring inflation. Chavez said the bolivar will now have two government-set rates: 2.60 to the dollar for transactions deemed priorities by the government, and 4.30 to the dollar for other transactions. The devaluation dropped the currency's value by 17 percent or 50 percent, depending on the tier. The higher rate, which he called the "oil dollar," will double the paper value of

Venezuela's petroleum earnings when converted to local currency. Oil accounts for about half the government budget, but that income has been squeezed by lower world oil prices in the last year.

Chavez said the priority exchange rate will be allotted for food, health care products, school supplies, machinery and equipment for economic development, among other things.

He said the new rates aim to boost the productive economy, "braking imports that are not strictly necessary and stimulating export policy."

Imports that will fall under the less favorable rate include automobiles, telecommunications goods, computers, appliances, alcohol and tobacco.

The currency's official

exchange rate has been held steady by the government at 2.15 bolivars to the dollar since 2005.

The currency devaluation is expected to have a mainly domestic impact, and limited effect internationally. The government has maintained strict currency exchange controls during 2003 to try to contain capital flight, and has set a fixed exchange rate that overstated the bolivar's value on the black market and in bond trading.

Chavez also said the government will intervene in the lucrative parallel bond market, where the rate has been hovering at about 6 bolivars to the dollar, nearly one-third the official rate. He did not give details about what actions the government would take.

The devaluation comes as the oil-exporting country struggles with a recession and 25 percent inflation, the highest in Latin America.



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# Politician's affair with teen rocks Northern Ireland govt

DAVID MORGAN

Associated Press Writer

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — It is a sordid tale that has captivated the deeply religious and politically partisan province of Northern Ireland: A top politician's 58-year-old wife, her 19-year-old lover and allegations she raised money on the sly so the young man could open a restaurant.

First Minister Peter Robinson vowed Friday he wouldn't quit as leader of Northern Ireland's Catholic-Protestant government following revelations that his wife, Iris — like him a British Parliament member — solicited 50,000 pounds (\$80,000) from businessmen to launch a riverside cafe for her young boyfriend.

"I will be resolutely defending attacks on my character and contesting any allegations of wrongdoing," Peter Robinson said after a BBC investigation team in Belfast exposed the scandal. He stressed that he hadn't known key details of his wife's affair before the program.

Robinson, who in 2008 succeeded the Rev. Ian Paisley as leader of Northern Ireland's government and the major Protestant political party, was expected to address journalists in Belfast later Friday as pressure grew for him to resign.

The Robinsons, aware that the BBC expose was coming, had issued a series of stunning — but in retrospect selective — admissions in recent days. First, Iris Robinson, now 60, announced she would not seek re-election because she was suffering clinical depression that left her unable to function in public life. Then she issued a second statement admitting her affair, revealing that she attempted suicide, and begging forgiveness from her husband and the public.

"Everyone is paying a heavy price for my actions... I am so, so sorry," she said.

Her husband, in turn, invited four journalists to his home Wednesday night to offer his

own agonized account of his family's private turmoil — an unprecedented display from a man renowned for an icy demeanor.

But the Robinsons neglected to mention the nub of the BBC program's allegations: That Iris Robinson's lover, 39 years her junior, had received third-party cash from her that should have been disclosed to

Parliament because she is a British lawmaker.

The BBC interviewed the former boyfriend, Kirk McCambley, now 21, who had a several-month relationship with Iris Robinson in 2008. She had been friends with the boy's father, who died earlier that year. "She looked out for me to make sure I was OK," McCambley told the BBC. □



A June 5, 2008 photo from files of Iris Robinson, with her husband, Northern Ireland First Minister Peter Robinson.

Associated Press

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In this photo taken Jan. 7, 2010 made available Friday Jan. 8 2010, Italian police and carabinieri officers in riot gear clash with a group of immigrant workers in the streets Rosarno, near Reggio Calabria, southern Italy.

Associated Press

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## Migrants riot in southern Italian town

ADRIANA SAPONE

ARIEL DAVID

Associated Press Writer

ROSARNO, Italy (AP) — Hundreds of migrant workers, most of them Africans, went on a rampage Friday in a southern Italian town in a second day of rioting, with authorities reporting at least 37 wounded, including 18 police officers and five migrants.

Violence ebbed and flared throughout Friday in Rosarno, a town near the western coast of Calabria in the “toe” of the Italian peninsula.

The clashes in the volatile area had begun a day earlier, when two migrants were wounded by pellet fire, said a top police official, Renato Cortese, in the regional capital.

Police reinforcements were being sent in the next hours, likely during the night, with the exact number still being decided, the Interior Ministry said.

Friday evening, another two migrants were wounded in the feet and legs by pellet fire, and three more were seriously injured when they were beaten with metal rods, police and hospital officials said.

The two migrants shot Friday were in the hamlet of Laureana di Borrello, 6 miles from Rosarno, said Cortese. There was no information about the attacker.

Officials at Santa Maria degli Ungheresi Hospital in the nearby town of Polistena said one of the migrants beaten by metal rods had surgery for a kidney injury and another was treated for an eye socket injury, and the third wounded in the attack was taken to another hospital for brain surgery.

The rioting began after Thursday's shooting, in which two men — one from Nigeria, the other from Togo — were lightly injured. The foreigners angrily blamed that shooting on racism, and groups of protesters stoned police, attacked residents and smashed shop windows and cars.

Friday, angry migrants, mostly from African nations, some armed with metal bars or wooden sticks, scuffled with police and residents in the streets of Rosarno.

Other residents were holed up in their homes, state radio reported, and schools and shops were shuttered.

“I’d say you could step out and buy some bread only because you have to eat, but if I had to choose I wouldn’t go out for an evening stroll,” said Cortese, asked by the AP in a telephone interview how dangerous Rosarno’s streets were.

Police said late Friday evening that at least 37 people had been injured, including the five migrants, 14 residents and 18 police officers.

A young mother with a bruise under an eye and a bandage on the side of her head, told state TV a group of migrants started smashing her car.

The woman said that, fearful for the safety of her small children, she managed to drive about two meters (6 feet), before her attackers pushed her car into a wall. Terrified, she fled with her family, and the assailants set her car afire, she said.

With television cameras rolling in the streets, some residents shouted that they wanted the migrants to leave the town.

An exact number of arrests was not available because the clashes were continuing, although they were “under control,” said the paramilitary Carabinieri police press office.

Earlier, the Interior Ministry said seven migrants had been arrested.

The Italians arrested included one who tried to hit a migrant with a bulldozer as the rioters headed toward the town’s center. Another Italian resident was taken into custody after trying to hit a migrant with a car, the Italian news agency ANSA reported from Rosarno, a town of 15,000 people.

Agazio Loiero, the governor of the Calabria region, told Sky TV said that the violence was “unacceptable” but the migrants had been “strongly provoked.”

Thousands of migrants move to the area each year to help with the seasonal fruit harvest. Living in improvised dormitories, including abandoned factories and huts, they earn as little as €20-€25 (\$30-37.50) in a dawn-to-dusk work day. Often without work permits, they do jobs many Italians shun, despite chronic underemployment in the poorly developed south.

Interior Minister Roberto Maroni convened a special meeting to discuss the rioting. Afterward, the ministry created a task force to deal with the violence and “aspects linked to the exploitation of illegal labor and health care” for the migrants.

Calabria also is the base of the international crime syndicate called ‘ndrangheta. The unrest follows a recent decision by the Italian authorities to increase police numbers in Reggio Calabria after a weekend bomb blast damaged a courthouse in what was seen as a move by the mob to intimidate magistrates.

The combination of ethnic strife and organized crime has sparked violence before among migrant communities in southern Italy. In 2008, migrants rioted in the Naples area after six Ghanians were murdered in a gangland-style shooting blamed on the local Camorra crime syndicate. □



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# Togo team bus attacked in Angola; 6 hurt

SAMUEL PETREQUIN,

AP Sports Writer

LUANDA, Angola (AP) — Gunmen in an Angolan area plagued by separatist violence opened fire on a bus carrying Togo to the African Cup of Nations on Friday, wounding at least six people including two footballers.

Togo players said they wanted to pull out of the 16-nation tournament, though a member of the Angola organizing committee said it will go ahead as planned from Sunday.

Togo's bus in a convoy from Congo was 10 kilometers (six miles) across the border in Angola when it came under fire. The bus driver died in the 30-minute ambush, according to Togo captain Emmanuel Adebayor.

"We were machine-gunned like dogs," Nantes striker Thomas Dossevi told Radio Monte Carlo. "They were armed to the teeth ... We spent 20 minutes underneath the seats of the bus."

Dossevi told Infosport television in France: "We were surrounded by police buses. Everything looked fine and we came under heavy fire. Everyone scrambled under the seats trying to protect themselves. It lasted at least a quarter of an hour with the police responding."

The wounded were taken to a hospital in Cabinda, and Portugal's state-run Lusa news agency said it received a communication from the region's main separatist group, FLEC, claiming to have carried out the attack.

Togo Football Federation vice president Gabriel Ameyi said the team should have flown to Angola instead of traveling by road.

He said defender Serge Akakpo and backup goalkeeper Obilale Kossi were among those hurt. FC Vaslui said on its Web site that the 22-year-old Akakpo, who joined the Romanian club from Auxerre last year, was hit by two bullets and lost a lot of blood but was now out of danger. Midfielder Alaixys Romao believed Togo should return home.

"If we can boycott it, let's do it," Romao told French TV

channel Infosport. "It's just not on for us to be shot at because of a football match. All I can think about is stopping this competition and going home."

Dossevi agreed: "We don't want to play this African Cup of Nations," he told Infosport. "We're thinking about our teammates — to be hit by bullets when you've come to play football is disgusting." Adebayor told the BBC that "if the security is not sure then we will be leaving tomorrow. I don't think they will be ready to give their life."

"Most of the players want to go back to their family. No one can sleep after what they have seen today. They have seen one of their teammates have a bullet in his body, who is crying, who is losing consciousness and everything." The African Football Confederation

condemned the attack against the Togolese delegation and held an emergency meeting.

"The Angolan authority deployed immediately a team down there to assess the exact situation," CAF said in a statement.

A delegation of Angolan officials and a delegation from CAF will be heading to Cabinda on Saturday while the Angolan Prime Minister will meet CAF president Issa Hayatou "to take decisions to guarantee the smooth running of the competition."

CAF also expressed its "total support as well as sympathy to the entire Togolese delegation."

FIFA also expressed "utmost sympathy" in a statement, and expected a report from CAF.

The tournament will still go ahead as planned, said a senior member of the local organizing committee, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the press. He said Ivory Coast, considered the top African team, arrived early Friday in Cabinda, where Togo was also to be based as part of Group B. Burkina Faso had been there since Jan. 2, and Ghana was the other group member.

Togo was due to play in the opening group match on

Monday against Ghana.

Even if the tournament goes ahead, the attack was a major blow to host Angola.

Angola has been struggling to climb back from decades of violence, and its government was clearly banking on the tournament as a chance to show the world it was on the way to recovery.

A building boom fueled by oil wealth has included new stadiums in Cabinda and three other cities for the tournament.

But Cabinda, Angola's main oil-producing region, has been plagued by unrest. Human rights groups have accused the military of atrocities and claim government officials have embezzled millions of dollars in oil revenue. The government has denied the



Residents gather next to a giant ball advertising the African Cup of Nations, in Luanda, Angola, Friday, Jan. 8, 2009. Gunmen opened fire Friday on a bus carrying Togo's national soccer team to a tournament in Angola, wounding at least six people including two footballers from the West African nation, an official said.

*Associated Press*

charges.

The simmering violence in Cabinda is separate from a larger civil war that broke out after independence from

Portugal in 1975.

An anti-colonial war had begun in the southern African country in the 1960s. Major fighting ended in 2002. □

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# Thousands celebrate the King's 75th at Graceland



People visit the grave of Elvis Presley at Graceland, Presley's home in Memphis, Tenn., on Friday, Jan. 8, 2010, Presley's 75th birthday.

By CAITLIN KING, Associated Press Writer  
MEMPHIS, Tenn. — About 3,000 fans joined Priscilla Presley, Lisa Marie and Elvis Presley's grandkids Friday at Graceland to celebrate what would have been the King of Rock 'n' Roll's 75th birthday. An international contingent of fans came to commemorate the event. Some came from as far away as Europe, while other fans were right from the King's adopted hometown of Memphis, where he died at Graceland in 1977 at the age of 42.

"I had to come. This is a special day. Seventy-five years is a wonderful period in Elvis'

## Brittany Murphy's mom's frantic 911 call released

By ANTHONY McCARTNEY, AP Entertainment Writer  
LOS ANGELES — A 911 call released Friday reveals the frantic efforts by Brittany Murphy's mother and husband to save the actress' life on the morning she died. Murphy's mother, Sharon, is heard crying and telling a fire dispatcher that the actress wasn't breathing. The dispatcher then gives directions to Sharon Murphy on how to try to revive Murphy. She relays the information to Murphy's husband, Simon Monjack, who had already started CPR and is heard in the background trying to revive the actress. "My daughter's passed

(AP Photo/Mark Humphrey) life. I'm out here to support Priscilla and Lisa Marie, and I think so much of them and respect them and their family," said Memphis resident Roger Harvey. "It means everything to be here. You're counting the days down until you can get on that plane," said Craig Smith of Britain. For Priscilla Presley, Presley's ex-wife and mother of his only child, Lisa Marie, the day was "bittersweet." "It's very difficult for me to even fathom that it's been 75 years for him. It's certainly bittersweet," she said. "Elvis has got the greatest fans. All of us here at Elvis

out," Sharon Murphy tells the dispatcher, adding that the actress had been ill, had vomited and was feeling dizzy. She states that her daughter wasn't taking any medication. She also said on the eight-minute call that no one saw how Murphy collapsed. Sharon Murphy is heard crying and wailing at times on the call. "Brittany please come back!" she is heard screaming. Brittany Murphy, 32, was found in the bathroom of her Hollywood Hills home on Dec. 20 and was later pronounced dead at a local hospital. Coroner's officials are awaiting the results of toxicology tests to determine how she died.

Presley Enterprises are always amazed at the support, the loyalty. I mean, they have certainly helped his legacy be where it is today, there is no doubt," she added. She said Presley probably wouldn't have made a big fuss over the milestone. "Elvis wasn't really big on having a whole lot of people, he liked it a little more intimate. He would definitely bring in family of course, friends, very close, intimate friends that he's had more many years," she said. "That's what he really enjoyed the most is people that he knew and friends that he had for gosh, going back to high school years." At the Graceland ceremony, two of his grandchildren cut a birthday cake that was later shared with the crowd. When asked what went through her mind at that moment, Priscilla Presley said: "I thought, my gosh, if Elvis only knew that he would have such beautiful grandchildren, so supportive to him, and how beautiful they are. It is bittersweet. He would have been very, very proud, absolutely very proud of his grandchildren." □



FILE - In this Feb. 4, 2008 file photo, actress Brittany Murphy attends the Max Azria 2008 Fall Collection during Fashion Week, in New York. (AP Photo/Peter Kramer, File) They have said the family reported Murphy was ill with flulike symptoms in the days before her death. □



Simon Cowell (L) and Randy Jackson, two of the judges on the American Idol television show, arrive for the show's season finale in Los Angeles, California May 21, 2008.

REUTERS/Fred Prouser

## "Idol" judge Jackson calls Cowell rumors distracting

By Jill Serjeant  
LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — "American Idol" judge Randy Jackson said on Friday he did not know whether fellow panelist Simon Cowell would be leaving the show but fevered speculation on his future was a distraction from the TV singing contest's mission of finding the next superstar. Jackson also told reporters ahead of Tuesday's 9th season opener of the top-rated U.S. show that he missed departed judge Paula Abdul, and that the dynamics on the panel had changed. "She is one of our best friends. I miss that. We look down the table sometimes and think, 'Where's Paula?'," said Jackson. "It's going to take a little getting used to. We're really sad about that." Cowell's contract as a judge with the Fox show ends in May 2010. His brother Tony said in a radio podcast in December that he would then quit "Idol" to focus on bringing his "The X Factor" singing contest to the United States in 2011. Asked if Cowell would leave, Jackson said: "I really don't know until I hear it from him...The rumors get so wild and crazy, you just don't know what to believe." "It is pretty much a distraction. I think people get a little side-tracked with that...Let's also focus on what we are judging and what the actual heartbeat of the show really is, and it is about finding that next superstar talent," he said. Cowell told USA Today on Thursday that he was still in discussions with Fox, but added: "Whether I'm on it or off it, I promise you -- and I really mean it -- I think the show will flourish without me. I genuinely do." Talk show host and comedian Ellen DeGeneres takes the place of Abdul this season but will not join the panel until aspiring singers from nationwide auditions are brought to Hollywood. Jackson said shooting for those episodes starts next week and will be shown in early February. "Ellen is funny, very charismatic and really cool...I think she will bring expertise from being a fellow entertainer who has been hugely successful. I think she will give the home viewer a real voice on the panel," he said. Pop stars Victoria "Posh Spice" Beckham, Katy Perry, Mary J. Blige and Joe Jonas are among the celebrity judges for the early audition rounds. Abdul abruptly quit the show last summer in a contract renewal dispute. Abdul's departure, the uncertainty over Cowell and slipping ratings over the past 3 years have led to questions about how long "American Idol" can continue its reign. "I think it can go on for some time," said Jackson. I think it is the best music reality show that has ever been on TV." □



## BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

## Stocks gain as traders take jobs report in stride



In this Jan. 4, 2010 photo, an historic marker is shown on Wall Street, in New York. Stocks traded in a tight range on Friday, Jan. 8, as the market took a relatively weak December jobs report in stride.

By STEPHEN BERNARD  
and IEVA M. AUGSTUMS,  
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK – Investors took a disappointing December jobs report in stride Friday and focused on signs that the overall employment picture is stabilizing.

Stocks zigzagged for much of the day but ended higher after the Labor Department said employers added jobs in November but cut 85,000 jobs in December, far more than the 8,000 analysts had expected. The gain for November marked the first increase in nearly two years.

The Dow Jones industrial average tacked on 11 points, while broader indicators logged bigger gains. All the major indexes posted strong advances for the week.

The monthly jobs report is considered an important indicator of the economy's health. However, improvement in the job market has been lagging as other parts of the economy improve, such as manufacturing, housing and retail sales.

The jobs report reminded investors that the recovery is likely to continue to proceed in fits and starts. Figures from the previous two months were revised to show that the economy generated 4,000 jobs in November. But the revisions showed a loss of 16,000 more

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

jobs than previously estimated in October.

"I don't think that anyone should expect a flip of a switch," said Linda Duessel, equity market strategist at Federated Investors.

The report also signals that many people are giving up on their search for work. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 10 percent. A year ago, when the economy was still reeling from paralyzed credit markets and the collapse of several large banks, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 143 points on news that the unemployment rate had climbed more than expected to 7.2 percent during December 2008. Employers cut 524,000 jobs that month.

Analysts were divided on whether the report is a sign unemployment will continue to move higher.

Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at the brokerage Avalon Partners Inc. in New York, said the unemployment number was disappointing, but didn't change the trend. He noted many of the job losses were in the construction industry, which is likely due to seasonal slowdowns.

"It was a disappointment, but I think we're on the right track. I think unemployment will begin to show growth very shortly," he said.

According to preliminary

calculations, the Dow rose 11.33, or 0.1 percent, to 10,618.19. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 3.29, or 0.3 percent, to 1,144.98, its fifth straight advance. The Nasdaq composite index rose 17.12, or 0.7 percent, to 2,317.17.

For the week, the Dow rose 1.8 percent, the S&P 500 index jumped 2.7 percent and the Nasdaq added 2.1 percent.

The robust climb was a welcome sign for 2010. Of

the last 36 times when stocks carved gains in the first five days of January, stocks ended the year higher 31 times, or 86.1 percent of the time, according to the Stock Trader's Almanac.

Even with traders' calm reaction and the gains for the week, some analysts saw reason for worry in the jobs figures.

Mike Rubino, CEO of Rubino Financial Group in Troy, Mich., was more pessimistic

about the employment picture, saying the jobless rate would have been far worse had the size of the work force not fallen by 661,000. That drop signals more people are giving up on even trying to find a job.

Meanwhile, workers finding jobs are getting paid less, which means consumption and consumer spending aren't likely to soon improve to levels seen before the recession began in December 2007, Rubino said. □

## Consumer borrowing falls sharply in November

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,  
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON – Americans borrowed less for a 10th consecutive month in November with total credit and borrowing on credit cards falling by the largest amounts on records going back nearly seven decades.

The dramatic declines raised new worries about whether consumers will cut back further on spending, making it harder for the economy to mount a sustained rebound.

The Federal Reserve said Friday that total borrowing dropped by \$17.5 billion in November, a much bigger decline than the \$5 billion decrease economists had expected.

Americans are borrowing less for a number of reasons. They remain fearful about their job prospects and they are also trying to replenish depleted investments. The government reported Friday that employers cut an additional 85,000 jobs in December, bringing total job losses to more than 8 million since the recession began in December 2007.

Even consumers who would like to increase their borrowing are finding it hard to get credit at banks. Many banks, hit by the worst financial crisis since the 1930s, have tightened lending standards. While economists have worried for years about the low rate of U.S. savings, the concern now is that consumers could derail the recovery if they start saving too much of their incomes.

Consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of total economic activity.

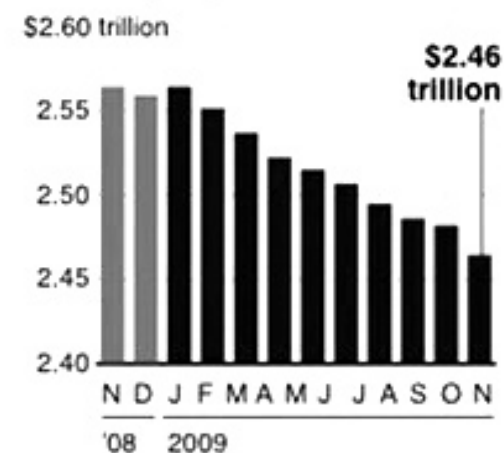
November's \$17.5 billion drop in total credit was the biggest amount in dollars terms since records began in 1943. That represents an 8.5 percent fall from the October borrowing level. That was the biggest percentage drop since total credit declined 9 percent in May 1980.

The borrowing category that includes credit cards fell by \$13.7 billion, an all-time record

## Borrowing less

In November, consumers borrowed less for a record tenth straight month.

Outstanding consumer debt  
Seasonally adjusted



SOURCE: Federal Reserve

AP

decline in dollar terms.

The drop was 18.5 percent from November, the biggest decline in percentage terms since a 29.6 percent plunge in December 1974.

The Fed's credit report excludes home loans and home equity mortgages, only covering borrowing that is not secured by real estate.

The drop in overall credit for 10 straight months was a record in terms of consecutive declines, surpassing the old mark of seven straight declines set in 1943 and again in 1991.

Borrowing in the category that includes credit cards has fallen for 14 straight months, also a record.

With the string of declines, overall consumer borrowing by the Fed measure has fallen to \$2.46 trillion. □



# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY



### NFL Preview

## Cowboys, Bengals look to break through

**BARRY WILNER**

**AP Football Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys haven't won an NFL playoff game in more than a decade. The Cincinnati Bengals haven't won one in nearly two decades. That can change, they hope, in Saturday's wild-card round. Both get familiar foes: Dallas takes on NFC East division rival the Philadelphia Eagles for the third time since early November, and for the second straight week. Cincinnati also has a rematch from last weekend against the New York Jets.

On Sunday, it's Baltimore at New England, and Green Bay at Arizona.

Unlike the Bengals, whose only appearance in the playoffs since 1990 was in 2005, Dallas is somewhat of a regular in the Super Bowl parade.

Since beating Minnesota and then losing to Carolina in the 1996 playoffs, the Cowboys



Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Patrick Crayton, left, and tight end Jason Witten (82) celebrate a touchdown by Crayton in the first half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Sunday, Jan. 3, 2010, in Arlington, Texas.

*Associated Press*

have reached the playoffs six times, including now, meaning they're on a six-game losing streak.

"It's surreal to be sitting here having to even answer that question," owner Jerry Jones said. "I wouldn't have dreamed that in '96 we wouldn't have (won) a playoff, and I wouldn't have dreamed that we would have had the turnover in the coaches that we've had."

"I wouldn't have dreamed we would have had some of the challenges that, whether it was self-imposed or not through me, that we've had in our quarterbacking. So all of those things as I look back over these years I couldn't have imagined that."

But imagine this: The Cowboys are among the hottest teams in the NFL heading into the playoffs.

Dallas set a team record with 6,390 total yards, exceeding 6,000 in a season for the first time.

*Continued on Page B14*



New York Knicks forward Wilson Chandler (21) goes up for a shot with Charlotte Bobcats forward Boris Diaw, top right, defending as Knicks forward Jared Jeffries (20) watches from the floor in the first half of the Knicks' 97-93 win over the Bobcats in an NBA basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010. Chandler scored a game-high 27 points in the game.

*Associated Press*

### NBA Roundup

## Knicks hit six 3s in 4th quarter to edge Bobcats

NEW YORK (AP) — The New York Knicks pulled out a 97-93 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats with a late flurry of 3-pointers in the NBA on Thursday. Wilson Chandler scored a season-high 27 points to lead the Knicks, who hit six 3-pointers in the final quarter and 12 overall. They also got a huge break when video review of Stephen Jackson's long jumper agreed with the officials' ruling of a 2-pointer, instead of a 3 that would have tied it with 1:43 to go.

Chris Duhon made the tiebreaking 3-pointer with 2:03 left, and Danilo Gallinari followed with two more for the home team. David Lee had 22 points, and Gallinari finished with 17 in the Knicks' third straight win. Jackson scored 26 points, and reserve Flip Murray 20 for the Bobcats, who had their three-game winning streak snapped.



In this Dec. 13, 2009, file photo, Seattle Seahawks coach Jim Mora looks on during the second quarter of an NFL football game against the Houston Texans in Houston.

*Associated Press*

**GREGG BELL**

**AP Sports Writer**

RENTON, Washington (AP) — The Seattle Seahawks fired coach Jim Mora on Friday after just one season, leaving the NFL team without a coach, general manager and president less than four years after they appeared in the Super Bowl.

This season, Mora led his hometown team to only five wins in 16 games. "We've made a tough decision today," Seahawks

## Mora out as coach of NFL's Seahawks

chief executive Tod Leiweke said. "It became apparent after conducting an extensive internal audit, that a new direction was needed to provide an opportunity for the organization to be successful." Leiweke called Mora "truly a standup man, who gave his full effort to our franchise."

Seattle has a 9-23 record since its last playoff appearance in January 2008, after four consecutive NFC West division titles.

"This team, more importantly this community, means so much to me that it hurts not being able to see this through," Mora said in a team statement. "I am disappointed I did not get the chance to complete my contract. This is a tough business that sometimes demands immediate gratification."

GM and president Tim Ruskell took the initial fall for the Seahawks' flop when he was fired on Dec. 3. Leiweke noted then that Mora was steward of a rocky transition in 2009 from Mike Holmgren's regime to one with a new offense, new defense and almost entirely new coaching staff. Mora said "maybe I oversold" optimism before the season. "It was harder than we thought," he said. Mora's first season following Holmgren's winning decade in Seattle was in sharp contrast to his rookie season as a head coach in Atlanta in 2004.



# Alabama holds off Texas to win championship game

EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

PASADENA, California (AP) —

Alabama won college football's championship game Thursday, hanging on to beat Texas 37-21 and withstanding a comeback led by the Longhorns' young replacement quarterback.

Alabama led 24-6 at halftime, and with Texas' quarterback Colt McCoy out of the game with an injured shoulder, the Crimson Tide looked like strolling to victory.

However Texas, directed by backup quarterback Garrett Gilbert, got within three points with three minutes still on the clock.

He threw two touchdown passes to All-American Jordan Shipley to trim the deficit to 24-21 with 6:15 left, and after an Alabama punt, Texas took possession at the 7-yard line, 93 yards away from one of the most improbable comeback stories in the history of the game.

An Alabama holding penalty moved the ball to the 17 when Gilbert dropped back to pass and got hit from the blindside by Alabama linebacker Eryk Anders, forcing a fumble which the Crimson Tide defense pounced upon.

Three plays later, Alabama's Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram surged into the end zone from the 1-yard line to give the Crimson Tide a 10-point lead, putting the game beyond reach.

A few minutes later, after Gilbert's third interception of the night, Trent Richardson scored his second touchdown to make it 37-21.

The win brought back glory to one of the country's most famous football programs, built up by Bear Bryant. This one came courtesy of coach Nick Saban, who resurrected this team in the short span of three seasons. Its previous national title was in 1992, led by Bryant's protege, Gene Stallings. This one gives Alabama eight since the polls began in the 1930s. Its seventh Associated Press championship should be a shoo-in when the votes are tabulated.

Ingram finished with 116 yards rushing and two touchdowns, and Trent Richardson had 109 yards and two scores as Alabama beat Texas for the first time in nine meetings between two of college football's most successful teams.

Anders' tackle will go down with them in Crimson Tide lore, as will Marcell Dareus, who knocked McCoy down and out with an injury to his throwing shoulder on Texas' fifth offensive play. "I just heard a thump when I hit him," Dareus said. "I did lay it down pretty hard. I didn't try to, but it felt great."

A bit later, Dareus picked off Gilbert's shovel pass and returned it 28 yards for a TD and a 24-6 lead late in the second quarter.

But it wasn't quite over.

"It was like we'd won the game at halftime," Saban said. "But you can't accept being average. You're playing a team in the national championship game that knows how to win."

Seeking its second national title in five years, Texas got to the game on the back of McCoy, its All-American quarterback, who often looked like a one-man show in leading the Longhorns to 13 straight wins this season.

After the injury, McCoy was asking to go back in to finish his last college game. His father, interviewed on television, said the injury wasn't that bad.

But Texas coach Mack Brown erred on the side of caution, and McCoy spent the second half wearing a headset on the sideline,



Alabama head coach Nick Saban holds the championship trophy after winning the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Texas in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010. Alabama defeated Texas 37-21.

Associated Press

trying to encourage his teammates. anything to be out there because it would have been

"I would have given different," he said. □

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# A slow start, quick rebound for Lucas Glover

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) — U.S. Open champion Lucas Glover played 26 tournaments last year and made only two eagles. It only took him nine holes in the new season to match that total, and the timing could not have been better. Glover's round featured two eagles and four straight birdies, a nine-hole stretch that he played in 9-under par and led him to a 7-under 66 and a one-shot lead.

"Any time you have a stretch like that, it gives you confidence because something is there," Glover said.

His final birdie on the par-5 18th, pitching to within a foot of the cup, put him atop the leaderboard over Martin Laird, Nathan Green, Matt Kuchar, Nick Watney and Dustin Johnson.

British Open champion Stewart Cink and Masters champion Angel Cabrera were among those at 68, along with defending champion Geoff Ogilvy, who had a late bogey. With a 28-man field at Kapalua, it remained relatively tight from top-to-bottom.

Heath Slocum (75) and Mark Wilson (74) were the only players who failed to break par on a breezy day above the Pacific Ocean. Even so, a nine-shot difference between first and worst is unusual.

Glover has not been to Kapalua since 2006, when he won at Disney by holing a bunker shot on the last hole.

"I'm pretty pleased to make a couple of eagles and get the ball rolling," he said.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of his round is how his brilliant stretch of golf ended. From the front of the par-4

14th green, he chipped weakly to 8 feet and missed the birdie putt, then missed a 3-foot birdie on the par-5 15th.

Green felt particularly good after his worst shot of the day. He hit it left of the green on the par-3 eighth and tried to play it from the weeds, but the thick grass grabbed the club and pulled the shot straight to the left. Green feared it was going to hit the head of a woman, one of about 10 people in his gallery, but it hit her in the arm.

"I actually said, 'Sorry,' while the ball was still on the club face," Green said.

From some 30 yards beyond the green, he chipped to 6 feet and got out with a bogey.

"That's the stuff I wasn't doing much at all last year," Green said. "If I had a slightly good break like that, I



Lucas Glover hits from the 18th tee during the first round of the SBS Championship golf tournament in Kapalua, Hawaii, Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010. Glover shot a 7-under-par 66.

Associated Press

wouldn't make the most of it. I wouldn't manage to get it up and down."

He settled down after that with four birdies on the back nine. Johnson had eight birdies to offset a few mistakes, which

are expected early in the year. Laird had the honor of hitting the opening tee shot of the 2010 season, and he split the middle of the fairway, which isn't hard to do since it's about 80 yards wide. □

## NFL PREVIEW

Continued from Page 12

The defense, which blanked the Eagles last weekend to win the division, allowed only 37 points total in the last four games.

Still, there is that 13-year run of disappointment, and the Eagles have won their first playoff game in seven consecutive appearances. They've taken 10 playoff games since Dallas last won one.

"We've just got to put it together any way possible to go out there and win," Eagles game-breaking receiver DeSean Jackson said. "They've got our number this year. They've beat us two times. I'm not going to put anything more into it. They're a good team, but they're a beatable team."

So are the Jets, who lost seven times this season. But they went 5-1 to end the regular season, received help from Indianapolis and the Bengals resting regular starters, and sneaked in with a 9-7 record. They're hotter than

the Bengals, who finished 1-3 and struggled for much of the second half of the season. Indeed, Cincinnati was 6-0 in winning the AFC North, but 4-6 outside the division.

The Bengals face the league's top-ranked defense and No. 1 rushing offense, and New York dominated in those areas last Sunday. But that was in the Meadowlands and Cincinnati had little to gain.

"I just hope we go out with the same intensity and I'm sure we will," Jets rookie coach Rex Ryan said. "Knowing that we're going to get Cincinnati's best shot, knowing that they are going to get ours, and see if we're good enough to beat them."

The New England Patriots were good enough to beat the Baltimore Ravens 27-21 in October and won the AFC East at 10-6.

The Ravens earned the other AFC wild card at 9-7.

New England will be without league-leading receiver Wes Welker, gone with a knee injury sustained last Sunday.

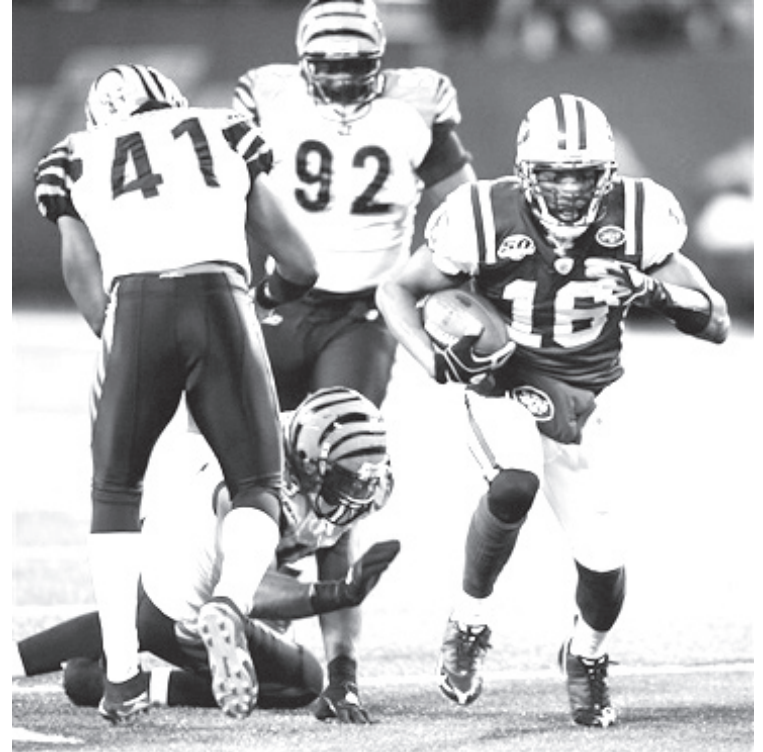
Look for the Ravens to double-team Randy Moss on every down.

Look for quarterback Tom Brady and coach Bill Belichick to find other ways to attack a defense that is not quite as formidable as in recent years.

"For two days you're going, 'We don't have Wes. What are we going to do?'" Brady said. "And then you put together a game plan and you get out there and practice and you're like, 'Man, OK. All that stuff looks pretty good.'"

The NFC West champ Arizona Cardinals looked pretty bad a week ago in losing at home 33-7 to the Green Bay Packers. Neither team had anything on the line, but the Packers used their starters far longer than the Cardinals did.

This time, all the key guys should go, although such stars as Packers cornerback Charles Woodson (shoulder), Cardinals receiver Anquan Boldin (ankle) and cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie (toe, knee) could be hobbled.



New York Jets' Brad Smith, right, runs for a touchdown past Cincinnati Bengals defenders Chinedum Ndukwe, left, Rashad Jeanty, on ground, and Froste Rucker during the second quarter of an NFL football game at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., Sunday, Jan. 3, 2010.

Associated Press

"Anytime one of your best players and your leaders isn't on the football field it's tough because you know the effort he gives every week," Cardinals quarterback Kurt Warner said.

"You know what you can expect from him and there's always a question mark when you have to have somebody else step in for those kinds of guys." □



# Clijsters advances to final against Henin

JOHN PYE

AP Sports Writer

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Kim Clijsters will meet Justine Henin in a highly anticipated all-Belgian final of the Brisbane International after both won their semifinals Friday.

Top-seeded Clijsters beat Germany's Andrea Petkovic 6-4, 6-2, hours after seven-time Grand Slam title winner Henin swept past Ana Ivanovic 6-3, 6-2 to secure a spot in the final of her first tournament since returning from retirement.

Henin leads Clijsters 12-10 in head-to-head matches after winning their past three meetings — all in 2006.

"I don't think anybody, anywhere around the world, especially Belgium, even our own groups and teams ... ever expected to see this again," Clijsters said. "It's real exciting. It's going to be an interesting one again. It's, you know, back to the old days."

Henin quit in May 2008 when she held the No. 1 ranking. She announced her comeback last September, soon after the 26-year-old Clijsters won the U.S. Open in her third tournament back after more than two years in retirement.

"It's always special when I play Kim. It's a day I like a lot," Henin said. "That's what a lot of people hoped for and expected."

"We've had a lot of great fights over the years. But a lot of things happened to her, a lot of things happen to me. It's going to be a different situation."

Men's top seed Andy Roddick fired 16 aces in a 6-3, 7-6 (5) win over Frenchman Richard Gasquet on Friday to move into a semifinal against fourth-seeded Tomas Berdych, who beat eighth-seeded Thomas Bellucci of Brazil 7-6 (4), 2-6, 7-6 (3).

This is Roddick's first tournament since injuring his

knee in October and he faces singles and doubles — he is partnering James Blake — on Saturday.

"I wanted to come here and play well, get better with each match and get matches in. That's my biggest thing," he said. "I'd love to win here. The goal is to be prepared for Melbourne and I feel like that has been accomplished for the most part."

"Now it's the business end of the tournament, you want to try to go as far as you can." Defending champion Radek Stepanek will take on Frenchman Gael Monfils in the other semifinal on Saturday, before the women's final in the night session on Pat Rafter Arena.

During her time off the tour, Clijsters got married and had a child. Unranked and unseeded at New York in September, she became the first mother to win a major since Evonne Goolagong Cawley at



Kim Clijsters, left of Belgium celebrates beating Andrea Petkovic of Germany in the 2nd semi final match during the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010. Clijsters won the match 6-4, 6-2, and Belgium's Justine Henin, below, reacts after beating Ana Ivanovic of Serbia 6-3, 6-2 in their semifinal match at the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Friday, Jan. 8, 2010.

Associated Press

Wimbledon in 1980.

She had played only one tournament between the U.S. Open and Brisbane and was expecting a "big challenge" against Henin on Saturday.

The Belgian pair grew up playing tennis together,

Clijsters saying they shared rooms while traveling for under 12s tournaments before eventually going down differing paths. She thinks that they can help each other progress in the rankings, simply by being on tour. □



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# Alabama No. 1 in final AP poll for seventh time

By RALPH D. RUSSO

AP College Football Writer

PASADENA, Calif. — It's unanimous. Alabama is back on top in college football.

The Crimson Tide was voted No. 1 in The Associated Press poll early Friday to earn its seventh AP title after beating Texas 37-21 in the BCS championship game.

Only Notre Dame has more AP national championships, with eight. Oklahoma also has seven.

The Crimson Tide (14-0) hadn't finished No. 1 since 1992, but in just three seasons under coach Nick Saban, the South's most storied program has returned to greatness.

"Third year and we're already national champions?" Alabama nose guard Terrence Cody said. "That's hard to believe."

Texas (13-1) is No. 2 in the Top 25 and Florida (13-1), last season's champion, was third.

The only other unbeaten team in the nation, Boise State (14-0), wound up fourth.

It was the Broncos' best finish in the AP poll. Back in 2006, the last time Boise State busted the BCS and went undefeated, the Broncos ended up fifth in the final rankings.

Only four points separated Florida and Boise State.

The USA Today coaches' poll had the same top five as the AP, but the gap between No. 3 Florida and No. 4 Boise State was 11 points. The Tide is the fourth straight Southeastern Conference team to win the national title. No league had ever captured three straight before last season. Alabama is the first unanimous No. 1 in the final Top 25 since Texas in 2005.

Ohio State finished fifth followed by TCU, Iowa, Cincinnati, Penn State and



Alabama players celebrate with the championship trophy after winning the BCS Championship NCAA college football game against Texas in Pasadena, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 7, 2010. Alabama defeated Texas 37-21.

Virginia Tech, giving the Poor postseason showings nationally, but this season Big Ten three top 10 teams, in recent years have hurt Ohio State and Iowa won the most of any league. the Big Ten's reputation BCS games as underdogs

*Associated Press*

## Saban not counting on 'Bama repeat just yet

By JOHN ZENOR

AP Sports Writer

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — Nick Saban cracked a few jokes and even some smiles, deadpanning about the players' poor execution of his celebratory Gatorade bath. And it didn't take long for him to start looking ahead to the challenges Alabama faces.

This is what the Crimson Tide coach is like the morning after winning a national championship — a tad more relaxed but no less focused. Think you'll be the favorite to repeat, coach?

"People who make those statements sort of just look at the periphery of well, 'You've got Julio Jones, you've got Mark Ingram, you've got Trent Richardson, the quarterback's coming back, so therefore everything's going to turn up roses,'" Saban said Friday at a news conference.

"But that's not necessarily the case. You've got to build a team."

He's already rebuilt the program. The Tide wrapped up its latest national title with Thursday night's 37-21 victory over Texas, further cementing Saban's spot in 'Bama lore after just three seasons. Literally.

Plans for a Saban statue are "already underway," athletic director Mal Moore said. It'll join the ones of Bear Bryant and the three other coaches to win national championships at Alabama.

It's a historic monument for a coach who spends scant time worrying about history. Saban said he hadn't thought about that until

wife Terry brought it up Friday morning.

"In all honesty, I guess that when you're driven and you put as much into what you do as we have not just for this year but for 30-something years, you would hope that something you do leaves a mark and the way you did it leaves a mark that is positive, that maybe could affect someone in a positive way in the future," Saban said.

A big reason for his success is his ability to focus on the present and future. Even hours after celebrating Alabama's seventh AP national title and the eighth of the poll era.

Saban took a call from President Obama on the ride back from the news conference. He even invited the president to play in the NBA — "Noontime Basketball Association" — of coaches and other staffers in the offseason if he's ever around Tuscaloosa, Alabama spokesman Jeff Purinton said.

Plans for a celebration in Tuscaloosa are in the works.

Saban said he hung out with family and friends in his hotel suite after the game. "That's celebration enough for me," he said.

If he didn't look thrilled about the Gatorade shower he received as the clock wound down Thursday night at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, it's because he was whacked on the head by the bucket.

"I don't know if you noticed but our defensive players did a pretty good job of hitting, but they're not supposed to hit you in the head with the bucket," Saban said, smiling. "The intensity of the dunk was the problem." □

and Penn State beat LSU in the Capital One Bowl.

Pac-10 champion Oregon starts the second 10, followed by BYU, ACC champion Georgia Tech, Nebraska and Pittsburgh.

For the Cornhuskers, it's the best final ranking since 2001, when they finished eighth.

No. 15 Pittsburgh, along with Wisconsin, Utah, LSU, Miami and Mississippi complete the top 20. The Hurricanes hadn't finished a season ranked this high since they were No. 17 after the 2005 season.

The final five were Texas Tech, Southern California, Central Michigan, Clemson and West Virginia.

USC's victory in the Emerald Bowl against Boston College helped the Trojans avoid ending a season unranked for the first time since 2001, coach Pete Carroll's first year.

Alabama won five AP championships under Bear Bryant, three in the 1960s and back-to-back titles in 1978 and '79.

After Bryant retired in 1982, Alabama couldn't keep up with the high standards he set. Gene Stallings, one of Bear's Boys, came the closest, winning a national title in 1992.

But in the late 1990s and earlier this decade there were some lean — and at times embarrassingly bad — seasons for Alabama.

The Tide lured Saban away from the NFL after the 2006 season. He had 'Bama back in the national title hunt last season and completed the journey this season.

"I'll tell you what I told the team," Saban said, "that I've never been prouder of a group of guys for their resiliency, their buy-in, their hard work, the blood, sweat and tears that they put in to accomplish what they accomplished this season." □





Frits Goedgedrag

## Investigation ordered into Bonaire corruption report

*~The Hague shocked by Nicolaas' alleged demands~*

THE HAGUE- The alleged deal that Bonaire's Commissioner Anthony Nicolaas made with the ADB party of Jopie Abraham to bring down the former UPB Executive Council has shocked politicians in The Hague and the Dutch Government has asked Governor of the Netherlands Antilles Frits Goedgedrag to investigate the matter. Several questions on the issue have also been posed by parties in the Second Chamber. Following a report in the Curaçao daily Antilliaans Dagblad on Thursday which indicated that the new Bonaire government was more or less treated as ordinary merchandise and sold for money, State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten requested the Governor to investigate the circumstances under which Bonaire's current Executive Council was formed last year. "I have asked the Governor to look into this and to also get an update on what the Government of the Netherlands Antilles will do with the information that has been published," said Bijleveld-Schouten on Thursday.

Continued on Page B11

# Aruba Looks to A Strong 2010 as Ex-UK Visitors for 2009 Soar

ORANJESTAD - The Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba defied the credit crunch in 2009 and is aiming for an even better 2010.

Aruba has now firmly established itself as one of the top 10 destinations in the Caribbean for the UK market: according to the latest available figures, from January to September 2009 Aruba saw a 41.88 per cent year-on-year increase in visitor numbers from the UK (10,265 as opposed to 7,235 for the same period in 2008). This is the first time that the island has surpassed 10,000 visitors from the UK in a single year.

For 2010 the Aruba Tourism Authority's UK office is implementing a £150k advertising campaign to further raise the profile of the island among UK consumers and to continue to increase the number of visitors.

Building on last year's highly successful promotion, the Aruba Tourism Authority is expanding its presence on the London Underground, which now includes tube car panels, show case squares



(large posters) and LCD digital moving images by the escalators. The campaign was launched at the beginning of January and will run for six weeks.

In addition – supporting the increased frequency of Thomson's flights from Manchester (which go weekly from fortnightly in May) – a three-month taxi campaign was launched in November, with 60 Aruba-themed cabs

driving around Manchester. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines is also resuming its Aruba service on 1st February, due to growing demand (flights between Amsterdam and Aruba were suspended earlier in 2009).

Aruba Tourism Authority UK director Joanna Walding said: "Despite the economic downturn, Aruba had a record year and remains one of the fastest growing destinations

in the Caribbean for the UK market. With more flights available and two major advertising campaigns going on, we are confident that the upward trend can be maintained for 2010".

More than 30 UK tour operators now feature the island. The Aruba Tourism Authority operates a dedicated online training programme for UK travel agents, accessible at [www.ArubaAcademy.co.uk](http://www.ArubaAcademy.co.uk)

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Basta para quem não sabe: antes da chegada da polícia, em 2009, é possível que o desaparecimento tenha sido informado à imprensa.

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## The US Drug War, or the Curacao Contact

Nil Nikandrov

Vice Council of the US Consulate General Curacao James Edward Hogan left his home on foot late at night on September 24, 2009 for one of his regular walks. Used to them, his wife reported him missing only the next morning. Search for Hogan, initially conducted by the US Consulate staff and intelligence agents, began without much publicity. The local authorities were notified only when Hogan's clothes covered with blood were found.

The incident became widely known shortly thereafter. Local media floated various stories including Hogan's leaving his wife

for another woman, imitating his own death to let his wife get the life insurance payment, or being killed as an act of revenge by the drug mafia with which he allegedly had ties. Gradually the drug-related version grew dominant.

The media discovered that Hogan had worked for the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and had served as a trade representative in Africa after receiving additional training.

It appeared that - as an operative - he indeed dealt with drug-trafficking groups. If he was dead, who could have killed him and why?

Continued on Page 3



# KMPG unveils Aruba's tax rules compilation at Tierra del Sol



West Punt – The senior partners of the regional KPMG accounting branches, Fong-Mang Cheong and Lindomar Scoop from Aruba,

together with Ralph Palm from Curacao, presented the edited and bound 2010 tax rules compilation to Ritza Lopez-Hernandez, Director of



Tax and Customs of the island government.

KPMG with offices in Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, St Maarten, Surinam and Cuba, organized the elegant party at Tierra del Sol Country Club serving hour d'oeuvres and cocktails accompanied by the music of Delbert Bernabela.

The party was attended by local legal and banking professionals, who found the publication very helpful. □





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# The US Drug War, or the Curacao Contact

*Continued from Page B1*

Scrupulous journalists invoked a recent raid against a drug cartel which supplied cocaine from Colombia to the US, Middle East, Holland, Belgium, and Denmark. The major operation had been carried out last April by DEA in Curacao and Aruba with the help of the local police. The 17 people arrested in the case were Colombians, Surinamese, Curacao and Aruba natives, Venezuelans, and Cubans. As usual, DEA supplied no details concerning the Venezuelan and Cuban members of the group, thus creating a pretext for a media campaign charging Havana and Caracas with involvement in drug trafficking. Moreover, 4 individuals from Lebanon had also been arrested during the raid, which made it possible for the media to pick up the version that Hezbollah terrorists were getting drugs from their Venezuelan partners. DEA has tried for a decade but failed to discover any links between Venezuela and Hezbollah's drug groups, but no doubt new propaganda campaigns targeting Venezuela are in the making. Some elements of the fictional scenario – allegations that speed motorboats delivered cocaine from Venezuela to Curacao - have already been leaked to the media. Motorboats carrying drugs from South America to the Caribbean Islands are a reality, but the truth is that they are registered in Colombia. DEA is known to greenlight the drug trafficking under its own control while suppressing the competition in the business highly profitable for the US (and DEA), which is posed by “unaffiliated” players. US agencies treat Curacao, Aruba, and Bonaire as their own backyard. For DEA, Hollywood-style episodes with bad cops putting drugs into the pockets of innocent people, etc. are routine practice. Not surprisingly, some Latin American countries are deporting DEA operatives and refusing to cooperate with the US agency. The US SOUTHCOM maintains the so-called Forward Operating Locations (FOLs) on Curacao and Aruba. They are equipped with advanced air and naval surveillance facilities and the electronic equipment capable of intercepting all types of communications. As a result, the islands are closely watched and the existence of “independent” criminal groups on them is absolutely impossible. Seaports, airfields, banking, the real estate sector, administration, and diplomatic missions on Curacao and Aruba are defenseless against the US monitoring and heavily infiltrated by Washington's agents. The only surviving drug groups in Curacao are those used by DEA in its strategic games. Obviously, DEA planned the recent raid against a Curacao drug group as a major provocation against Venezuela, but the operation collapsed as no real Chavez's envoys or Hezbollah terrorists were caught. Then the story

about individuals from Lebanon coming to Curacao was invented – if you are ready to believe that anyone from Lebanon is a Hezbollah member, they must have been drug traffickers and terrorists. One might say the fabrication is too naive for DEA, the CIA, or any other US agencies, but they are facing stiff inter-departmental competition and are under pressure to churn out results to justify their enormous budgets. As a result, almost any “information” is regarded as usable. While DEA is saying that Venezuela and Ecuador are among the leading drug producers, Latin America's number one drug factory supplying plastic-packaged narcotics to all parts of the world is Colombia. The country's extensive drug network employs its own financial centers, carefully maintained routes, corrupt officers at customs checkpoints and in police forces, etc. This activity would have been impossible without the help of DEA, the secret agency with its own logistics and system of analysis.

Videos showing thousands of confiscated packages containing cocaine are regularly featured on Venezuelan TV channels. The country's law enforcement agencies became a lot more efficient since the expulsion of DEA. Currently they are uprooting the drug network DEA had been cultivating for years both to earn money and to compromise Chavez and his regime. When Venezuela opposed the Honduran coup and made efforts to reinstate the country's legitimate President Jose Manuel Zelaya, Washington claimed Chavez was keenly interested in Honduras as an intermediate base for supplying drugs to Mexico and the US. A typical case of blame-shifting! Zelaya was the first Honduran President who was not a total US puppet. His predecessors readily and profitably cooperated with DEA. The independent Zelaya who re-emerged as a populist leader ruined the plans of the US super-cartel which had turned Honduras into its base in Central America. The Honduran drug chronicles illustrate the proportions of the “commercial” aspect of DEA activity. Crushes or interceptions of planes loaded with drugs are reported nearly every week. Speed motorboats registered in Honduran seaports deliver cocaine and heroine to Mexico and the US East Coast, and only a fraction of the traffic – that with no ties to DEA – gets intercepted.

DEA made a crucial contribution to the coup in Honduras as the majority of the country's army command used to be on its payroll. Much to the displeasure of DEA, Zelaya planned to purge the corrupt officers corps. The November, 29 “election” of Porfirio Lobo Sosa as the President of Honduras coincided in time with the assassination of Gen. Julian Aristides Gonzalez, director general of the

National Office for Combating Drug Trafficking, by two gunmen riding motorcycles in Tegucigalpa. Reportedly, Gonzalez was going to write a book about his transactions with DEA and had a lot to tell about its ties with the Honduran cartels. No doubt, Colombia is the leader in drug production. Bolivian President Evo Morales said recently that the US deliberately reinforces the negative processes in Colombia such as the escalation of its domestic armed conflict, the surge of the paramilitary movements, and the expansion of drug groups to justify its continued presence in the country and to use it as a foothold in the struggle against the region's populist regimes. Destructive processes are gaining momentum in Mexico, also with a major contribution from DEA. The drug war with a death toll higher than that of the US in Afghanistan is the country's permanent condition. It took over 9,000 lives in 2009, many of those killed being police officers and army servicemen. The confrontation in Mexico is unbelievably ferocious. Beheaded and mutilated corpses in plastic bags are found in its cities daily. Drug cartels are not only fighting for control over Mexico's regions but also over parts of the neighboring Guatemala. One of America's top undercover agents Michael Levine retired from DEA in 1989 after 25 years of service. Disillusioned, he authored *Deep Cover: The Inside Story of How DEA Infighting, Incompetence and Subterfuge Lost Us the Biggest Battle of the Drug War*, in which he stated that the US war against drugs is essentially a pretext for covert operations abroad. Levine took part in a number of operations that could be crowned with arrests of the key figures of the drug business underworld, but every time his superiors told to leave them at large. He faced threats from DEA seniors when he attempted to reveal facts compromising the agency.

The current situation in DEA is even more sinister than it used to be in the 1980ies. In the situation of the unprecedented financial crisis the drug business rose from the tactic to the strategic level. The annual drug business revenue ranges from \$700 bn to \$1 trillion, which is comparable to the revenues generated by all oil companies.

Chances are slim that James Edward Hogan is alive. One of his operative contacts unexpectedly called him the night he went missing, and his mobile phone was found later in the water near the place where he supposedly had been killed. It is possible that, as it had happened before on Curacao, the assassination was an act of revenge perpetrated by the members of the cartel who had evaded arrest. Tens of FBI, CIA, and DEA operatives continue to investigate Hogan's disappearance. Whatever happens, the struggle over dominance over the drug markets will go on. □



# IGAF Worldwide enjoys a party at Tierra del Sol



WEST PUNT -- IGAF Worldwide, an international association on independent accounting firms chose Aruba for its annual seminar.

Headquartered at the Hyatt Regency, group-members hailing from the USA, Canada, Germany and the UK enjoyed an outdoor cocktail party under the stars at Tierra del Sol County Club, organized by IGAF event planners Kevin Mead and Judy McLain.

The lovely cocktail hour was followed by a plated dinner party on the wraparound terrace of the restaurant, overlooking the California lighthouse. Guests also convened between-course, over conversation and cocktails in the new Ventanas del Mar cocktail lounge.

While in Aruba, IGAF Worldwide sampled the hospitality of the Tattoo Party Boat and the Kuku Cunucu, Party Bus. □





Fast & fun; Italian “your way”

# Scuiè Scuiè officially opens at the Palm Beach Plaza



However you pronounce the name of this innovative little eatery to open in the Palm Beach Plaza, it



offers something new and unique for affordable dining in Palm Beach. Owner Fabrizio is proud of his native cuisine, and felt that Aruba was the perfect place to conduct his pilot project for the Caribbean; a simple, fun place to sample Italian finger food, in the casual open-air environment where it was meant to be enjoyed.

“Scuiè Scuiè” means “quick, quick,” and patrons were rapidly lining up at the official opening on Thursday evening, January 7, to try any of the dozens of items offered off the color-coded menu based on the Italian flag. Items are listed under the green, white or red label, and cost AWG 4.50, 6.50 or 9.90 respectively, (\$2.57, \$3.71 or \$5.65).

Finger foods are often served on skewers and include anywhere from three to six pieces of tasty Italian nibbles, sandwiches, pasta and deli, which are very interesting alternatives to the usual Aruban snack. Pick a few from “column A” or mix and match with “column B & C” and you have a fun feast to please all the family. The purchase of your first drink allows you unlimited refills from the Palm Beach Plaza soft drink stand located in the center of third floor food court.

Those lucky enough to attend the opening event sampled a tasty Penne Alle Bolognese, compliments of the house. Each day, Scuiè Scuiè offers two different Pastas di Giorno along with the regular menu. We noticed vegetables prepared in several pleasing ways, which will make vegetarians happy, as well as provide a great way to get some greens into a picky young eater. The stuffed focaccias on the Red Label menu were especially appealing; they offer a hearty meal with a wide variety of ingredients.

Scuiè Scuiè joins Churromania and American Burger in the Palm Beach Plaza food court, and more is yet to come! □





# Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino invite all to share their Carnival spirit

The first official parade of Carnival 56 begins tonight with Fakkelt Optoch, or the Torch Parade, through the streets of Oranjestad. The marketing department of the Stellaris Casino, led by Adolf Everson and Yazira Feliciano, invited all Marriott guests and associates to join them in the Torch Parade as part of the Majestic Group, and to introduce their Caya 101 program during a press conference in the casino on Thursday evening.

The fee to join the Torch Parade is \$50, which includes a beautiful headpiece from the Majestic Crew, official Caya 101 tee shirt and accessories, dancing through the streets to Impak Band and unlimited bar. Guests have the option of sitting on the sidelines and enjoying a festive evening in a prime spot to watch the parade. The price also includes round-trip transportation from the Marriott Resort in Palm Beach to the parade in



Oranjestad. Stellaris Casino members can enjoy a “local” price of 55 Aruban Florins (\$31.50,) or redeem 310 slot points on their card. Inscription for participation is at the VIP desk in the Stellaris Casino from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM today.


Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino will continue the party mood through the following week beginning on January 10, culminating with their giant Caya 101 Party in the Stellaris parking lot on Friday, January 15.

During each day of Caya 101, Stellaris Casino Preferred Players can present their card to receive 4 raffle tickets. During the final grand event, the drawings will begin at 9:30 PM with a total of 5000 Aruban florins (\$2,850) in prizes to be awarded throughout the evening. Those not yet a member of the Stellaris Casino’s Preferred Players plan are welcome to sign up in the casino and begin receiving their raffle tickets and benefits immediately.

The Friday night

party will begin at 7:30 with a brass band parade featuring stunning carnival costumes of years gone by and popular island bands Impak, Youth Extreme and Oreo will perform. The evening will also feature a “Guess and Win” contest, and special prices on food and beverages.

Caya 101 offers great fun, cash rewards and a chance to mix and mingle with islanders and share their carnival spirit during the biggest and best party of the year! □



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G	<b>THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG</b>	daily: 4:45 matinee: 12:15	7:00 late show:	
PG-13	<b>THE BLIND SIDE</b>	daily: 4:00 matinee: 1:15	6:45 late show: 9:30 12:00	
PG	<b>ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"</b>	daily: 4:00 matinee: 12:00	6:00 late show:	
PG	<b>OLD DOGS</b>	daily: 4:15 matinee: 12:15	6:15 late show: 8:15 10:15 12:15	
PG-13	<b>2012</b>	daily: 8:00 matinee:	late show: 11:15	
R	<b>NINJA ASSASSIN</b>	daily: 9:15 matinee:	late show: 11:30	
PG-13	<b>AVATAR 3D</b>	daily: 4:30 matinee: 1:15	7:45 late show: 11:00	3D
R	<b>THE MAN WHO STARE AT GOATS</b>	daily: 8:00 matinee:	late show: 10:15 12:30	
AT PASEO HERENCIA				
R	<b>IT'S COMPLICATED</b>	daily: 6:45 matinee:	9:15 late show: 11:45	NEW
PG-13	<b>SHERLOCK HOLMES</b>	daily: 5:30 matinee: 2:30	8:30 late show: 11:30	
PG	<b>ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"</b>	daily: 4:00 matinee: 12:00	6:00 late show:	
G	<b>THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG</b>	daily: 4:30 matinee: 12:00	late show:	
PG-13	<b>2012</b>	daily: 8:00 matinee:	late show: 11:15	
PG-13	<b>DID YOY HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS</b>	daily: 5:00 matinee: 12:30	late show: 2:45	
PG-13	<b>AVATAR 3D</b>	daily: 4:45 matinee: 1:30	8:00 late show: 11:15	3D
R	<b>ARMORED</b>	daily: 7:30 matinee:	late show: 9:30 11:30	
PG-13	<b>THE IMAGINARIUM OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS</b>	daily: 6:00 matinee: 12:45	8:45 late show: 11:30	

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only with fresh and honest products! Ideally located in front of the Occidental Resort (Former Allegro), they are visited both by individuals and families alike, as they have a super kids menu, so they can enjoy their dinner as much as you

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**PALM BEACH** – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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**PALM BEACH** – A number of festive openings took place this week at the Palm Beach Plaza, attracting both locals and visitors to the brand new complex. Candyland on the second floor brings the charm and popularity of the Dutch candy

store to Aruba. Located right next to the upcoming movie theaters Candyland carries a wide variety of imported candies and other items for birthdays and special occasions. Candyland promises to delight to kids of all ages—even us big ones!



Churromania, an ultra-popular Latin American franchise, checked into the Palm Beach Plaza's food court. Churromania has perfected the Spanish art of making churros. Very few people can pass up a crispy, sugary churro, and Churromania makes it even harder to resist

by offering unique variations on the original. Try the churro topped with condensed milk and strawberries which is sinful!



# Palm Beach Plaza Continues to Reveal Its Treasures



Owner Fabrizio Battaglia performed the ribbon cutting of his Italian fast food outlet in the food court, proudly bringing a delicious tradition from his hometown of Napoli to the Palm Beach Plaza Mall in Aruba. Meaning “an easy

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sacrificing quality, taste, or real Italian tradition. American Burger also on the third floor food court is all set to serve those craving the real deal, a juicy broiled patty topped with different chesses and bacon. American

Burger also offers children's meals, and chicken specials in a fast and friendly American tradition.

Check all those and more out at the brand new Palm Beach Plaza. □



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PALM BEACH - STEINFELD presents WOW factor! at the MAGIC LIVE!® ...theater-of-illusions show, Westin - Aruba opened on December 25 at 9PM. MAGIC Live!® theater-of-illusions show, starring Adam Steinfeld... is an amazing night of Magic, Grand Illusions and Comedy, superb magic at it's

highest level, a lot of fun from start to finish, laugh-out-loud funny, intelligent, sophisticated, unconventional grand illusions, that will keep you asking, 'how the heck did he do that?' Perfect for the holiday season, have you ever dreamed of disappearing and reappearing in an instant? Master illusionist, comedy magician, Adam Steinfeld opened DEC 25, MagicLive show at the WESTIN, Aruba, nightly 9PM, every night, doors open at 8:30PM, and tickets may be purchased at the door, in the intimate Magic Live!

Live! theater-of-illusions theater, every seat is close to the stage. In his new illusion he calls; "PRESENT", a tall girl steps into a tiny box, elevated in-the-air, the box spins 360 degrees,

then the sections are taken away, one by one, until the girl vanishes completely... right before your eyes!

Then as if that isn't enough to run to your local optometrist, he re-assembles the box for the magicbabe to make a triumphant reappearance. It's an all new original illusion not seen anywhere else in the world.

I went back to see the show during rehearsals, and still couldn't figure out the secret.

Tourists and local fans will remember Steinfeld for past performances, in Aruba,



and on network television, Mr. Steinfeld recently authored "the Houdini Conspiracy", aka "Houdini Lives!", a collaborated work with new england mystery writer

Al Blanchard, he believes will be turned into a feature film.

The intimate Magic Live!® theater-of-illusions showroom is located just off the lobby of the Westin-Aruba in high-rise area, j.e. irausquin boulevard 77. Palm Beach, Aruba. Magic Live!® BOX

OFFICE tickets are located in main lobby. Purchase TICKETS AT THE DOOR.

SEE MAGIC, comedy and "seemingly impossible feats, get ready to marvel at the all new, MAGIC! theater-of-illusions show starring ADAM STEINFELD, opens DECEMBER, 25, nightly 9PM at the WESTIN, aruba. MAGIC LIVE! theater-of-illusions show...at the WESTIN-Aruba, 9pm nightly, starring AdamSteinfeld. □



## IF YOU GO

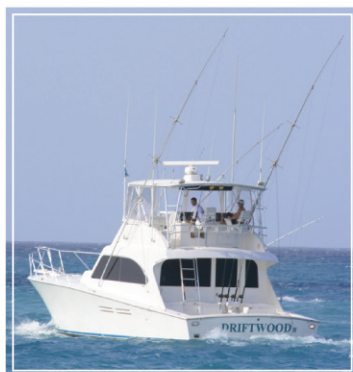
What: Magic Live! theater-of-illusions show  
Where: Westin - Aruba, palm beach (high-rise area)  
Who: starring, comedy illusionist, Adam Steinfeld  
Time: 9:00 pm, theater opens at 8:30pm  
Tickets: at the door  
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the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

## Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to [www.driftwoodaruba.com](http://www.driftwoodaruba.com).

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## Driftwood Restaurant

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# Bing.com Selects Curaçao as a Top 10 Destination in 2010

*Curaçao Just One of Ten International Cities or Countries to Be Chosen by Microsoft's Bing, Regarded as the Fastest Growing and Hottest Search Engine Tool on the Internet*

WILLEMSTAD - Curaçao has been chosen as a Top 10 Destination for 2010 by Microsoft's Bing, one of the hottest new search engines on the Web. Curaçao was the only Caribbean country selected on a list that included unique, global destinations such as South Africa, Malaysia and Morocco.

Bing writes, "The Dutch island of Curaçao is our top pick for the Caribbean this year, thanks to its gorgeous natural features (including wild flamingoes), a rich history and a unique culture. This is not the prototypical, frat-boy destination for spring

breakers." The island's new Renaissance Curaçao Resort and Casino is also highlighted for its stunning ocean-view rooms and on-site spa.

Curaçao's convenient location (just 2.5 hours from Miami), consistently balmy weather and European look and feel has always put it at the top of everyone's list of out-of-the-ordinary, atypical Caribbean destinations. For instance, Curaçao's capital, Willemstad is the only Caribbean city apart from Havana, Cuba to be ranked a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Willemstad also boasts distinctive Dutch colonial architecture with colorful, gingerbread-trimmed

buildings that are always photo-ready.

Bing is a "decision engine" from Microsoft whose travel editors scour the Web to find the latest news and information and uncover the hottest travel topics. The Bing Travel blog provides the information consumers need to travel smarter, and kicks off debates on the timeliest travel topics.

About Curaçao

With its pristine dive sites, secluded beaches, championship golf and rich local cuisine, Curaçao offers a little something for everyone – from the adventure traveler to those who simply want to unwind (and enjoy its perfect



climate). Curaçao's eclectic mix of history and culture is showcased in its capital city of Willemstad, named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Located

on the outer fringes of the hurricane belt this welcoming, unique island paradise is often referred to as the Caribbean's hidden treasure. □

## Investigation ordered into Bonaire corruption report

*Continued from Page B1*

"Of course this still needs to be verified, but I am shocked by this story. This isn't good governance, but reeks of nepotism and corruption. These kinds of practices are intolerable," she added.

The State Secretary said she assumed the Antillean Public Prosecutor's Office had also taken note of the publication in Antilliaans Dagblad and that it will take proper action. She said every serious sign of corruption had to be tabled at the Public Prosecutor's office. "For that reason I sent the Black Book (a document concerning corruption in Bonaire, ed.) to the Public Prosecutor's Office," she said.

Various parties in the Second Chamber are seeking clarity from the State Secretary about the publication. The Socialist Party, the largest opposition party, wants Bijleveld-Schouten to draft a letter to explain what has happened in Bonaire, and the green left party GroenLinks and Labour Party PvdA posed a series of questions on Thursday.

Shocked

"I am shocked that a change in government was realized this way," said PvdA Member of Parliament (MP) John Leerdam. "This is what one calls corruption," said colleague Ronald van Raak of the SP. "This is unacceptable in the Dutch Kingdom," said MP Ineke van Gent of GroenLinks.

"Negotiating the formation of an Executive Council is an autonomous affair. It is Bonaire's call to decide this. It is not the business of the Netherlands if a new government decides that it wants to protect the coral reefs for example, or when a politician wants to have a certain portfolio, but it is different when nepotism is involved or money is being offered, because then it concerns good governance" said Van Raak.

SP wants a letter from the State Secretary by January 15, when the first package of draft legislation is

handled in Parliament's Permanent Committee of Antillean and Aruban Affairs NAAZ. "I want to know if these reports are true and what would be the consequence for the constitutional process," he said.

Leerdam said he supported SP's request for a letter. "There were already rumours which now seem to be confirmed. Jopie Abraham has to explain why he formed a government with a person like Nicolaas, even if it proves that ADB hasn't given in to Nicolaas' demands. As a self-respecting party, you should not even engage in talks with a person that dares present such a proposal," said Leerdam.

Nicolaas' demands

According to documentation obtained by Antilliaans Dagblad, Nicolaas had demanded four annual salaries at NAf. 125,000 each. He also demanded maintaining his portfolio as Commissioner, his appointment as member of the board of the most important government-owned companies and the appointment of political friends to a number of crucial functions.

Nicolaas sent his list with demands to Abraham in October 2008. If Abraham was willing to give in to these demands, he would make the then UPB government fall and get ADB into government. The list was made on Nicolaas' personal laptop.

Both he and Abraham are vehemently denying that a financial transaction was involved in the change of government.

Dutch MP Bas Jan van Bochove of the governing Christian Democratic Party CDA said he was keen to know how Bonaire would respond to this news. "Local politics will have to give account. The people of Bonaire will question this as well. It is up to the local parties, including Mr. Abraham, to give an answer," he said.

The latest developments don't necessarily have to influence the stance of the Dutch Government

on Bonaire's future, said Van Bochove. "I think we have to continue the process," he said. Van Bochove said the Dutch Government had taken notice of Nicolaas' sudden change of viewpoint on Bonaire's constitutional future. Initially Nicolaas fully supported Bonaire's integration into the Dutch Constellation. Bonaire's current government however has halted all negotiations and wants a referendum.

Independent inquiry

GroenLinks is calling for an independent investigation. "The Netherlands Antilles and the Netherlands are now in a final phase of a long-term trajectory to change the constitutional relations. This process should, if it is up to GroenLinks, benefit the Antillean people and improve the integrity of the Antillean public administration," said MP Van Gent.

"The past should be left for what it is. That is why GroenLinks wants an independent investigation into the possible corruption scandals in Bonaire which will especially serve as a lesson for the future. Citizens of Bonaire deserve, just like all other people in the Dutch Kingdom, a complete transparent and integer government that is clear of corruption," stated Van Gent in a press release accompanying the party's questions posed to Dutch Government.

Both GroenLinks and PvdA asked Bijleveld-Schouten to confirm the reports in the media. The parties asked about the consequences of these reports on the negotiations with Bonaire and wanted to know if an investigation was being ordered to check if criminal acts had been committed.

This corruption investigation, according to GroenLinks, should not only involve Bonaire, but should also be extended to Saba and St. Eustatius, the other two islands which will become part of the Netherlands. □





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# Yankee dollar

The discussion about switching from the Antillean guilder to the US dollar in Curaçao and St. Maarten when the Netherlands Antilles ceases to exist has died down somewhat since a symposium on the subject at the end of last year. However, preparations for "dollarisation" continue unabated behind the scenes in financial circles in Willemstad, confirmed director Chicu Capriles of Maduro & Curiel's Bank (MCB), the parent company of Windward Islands Bank (WIB), during a recent interview on TeleCuraçao.

The banker was quite candid about it, saying the move made sense considering the strong economic ties to the US. He added that the public would be duly informed in due time and every effort would be made for the process to go as smoothly as possible.

The fact that the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, which are to become special overseas bodies of the Netherlands, have already chosen for the US dollar – rather than the euro, which says a lot – plays a role as well. Maintaining an Antillean guilder only for the two islands in the process of becoming autonomous countries in the Dutch Kingdom simply is not worth it, also because the dollar already rules in St. Maarten. The latter is definitely the case and has been for years. In fact, if it were not for government and people having to pay a one per cent foreign exchange licence fee at the bank every time they take out dollars, most likely even fewer guilders would be in circulation on the Dutch side.

That's why it's hard to understand why the local political establishment appears to be dragging its feet on this issue. After all, a switch to the dollar on "The Friendly Island" with its one-pillar tourism economy and North America as predominant source market most likely would be much easier and less cumbersome than in Curaçao. Not only that, but if Curaçao goes the dollar route it would leave St. Maarten little choice, because an own currency just for the island considering the widespread use of the dollar is hardly worth considering. In addition, the agreement for the two future countries to continue sharing the Central Bank would lose much of its value, because the role of that institution would be severely diminished in case of "dollarisation" and it probably would be replaced by a much smaller and less influential regulatory board to supervise the financial sector.

It's noteworthy that Central Bank President Emsley Tromp is the main proponent of switching to the dollar, despite the strongly limiting effect it would have on the very institution he heads. His position apparently has been adopted by financial circles in Willemstad to the point where work is already underway it make it a reality. St. Maarten should waste no time in doing its own homework. A switch to the dollar would indeed seem to make every sense in the world and at least would spell an end to the current undesirable practice of penalising local residents with a licence fee for doing business in the predominant currency. □





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# Morales designa a una joven ex Miss Bolivia como candidata a gobernación



La Paz - El presidente Evo Morales designó la noche del jueves a la ex miss Bolivia Jessica Jordan (2007) como candidata a la gobernación del departamento amazónico de Beni (noreste) para las elecciones regionales del próximo 4 de abril.

“Será la única gobernadora mujer de Bolivia. Ha sido una decisión difícil, pero hemos considerado su juventud y su capacidad”, señaló el jefe de Estado al presentar a la escultural modelo que ha pisado pasarelas de varios continentes.

Morales, que ganó las elecciones generales de diciembre pasado con el 64% de los votos, dijo que Jordan forma parte de los jóvenes, que sin ser militantes del oficialista Movimiento Al

Socialismo (MAS), están comprometidos con el “proceso de cambio”.

El mandatario socialista aseguró que necesita de los jóvenes de su país “para generar nuevos liderazgos”.

La modelo de 24 años señaló que aceptó el reto “para ganar” y aseguró que luchará con fe y esperanza, “por la dignidad, por el trabajo, por los indígenas, campesinos y por todos”, en una región que ha estado gobernada los pasados cuatro años, por Ernesto Suárez, un férreo opositor a Morales.

El próximo 4 de abril se realizarán en Bolivia las elecciones para gobernadores de los nueve departamentos y alcaldes de los 320 municipios. □

## Venezuela y la ALBA presentarían un candidato propio para suplir a Insulza

Caracas - El canciller chileno, Mariano Fernández, visita estos días Venezuela y Nicaragua en un viaje que la prensa chilena vincula con la búsqueda de apoyo para la reelección del chileno José Miguel Insulza como secretario general de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA).

Fuentes oficiales confirmaron a Efe estas visitas, que consideraron de carácter “privado”, pero no confirmaron que el motivo sea recabar apoyo para Insulza.

Sin embargo, el diario “La Tercera” señala hoy que la gira de Fernández busca obtener el apoyo de esos países a la reelección de Insulza en la OEA.

Fernández partió el miércoles por la noche a Venezuela y después proseguirá su viaje a Nicaragua, de donde regresará durante el fin de semana, antes de la llegada a Chile el próximo lunes del secretario adjunto de Estados Unidos para el Hemisferio Occidental, Arturo Valenzuela.

Nicaragua y Venezuela, junto con EE.UU., han rechazado la idea de adelantar las elecciones en la OEA, previstas para mayo, como Insulza y Chile quieren, según “La Tercera”.

A esto se suma la decisión de la Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de América (ALBA, integrada por Ecuador, Venezuela, Cuba y Nicaragua, además de países caribeños) de no apoyar a Insulza debido a la intención venezolana de presentar un candidato propio.

El canciller Fernández tenía previsto entrevistarse estos días con sus homólogos de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro, y Nicaragua, Samuel Santos, para tratar sobre la reunión del Consejo Permanente de la OEA que se celebrará el próximo miércoles.

Según indica el diario, en esa reunión se puede decidir si finalmente se adelantan o no las elecciones en el seno de organismo supranacional. □

## La pobreza general baja en Venezuela al 24,2 por ciento y la extrema al 6 por ciento

Caracas (EFE) - La pobreza general en Venezuela se ubicó en un 24,2 por ciento de la población al finalizar 2009, menor al 27,5 por ciento que registraba un año antes, mientras que la extrema bajó en ese lapso del 7,6 al 6 por ciento, informaron ayer fuentes oficiales.

El presidente del Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE), Elías Eljuri, señaló en una rueda de prensa que esos datos corresponden a la medición del indicador a partir del ingreso per cápita, lo que se conoce como “medición coyuntural de la pobreza”.

El INE también midió la llamada “pobreza estructural”, que se calcula a partir de las “necesidades básicas satisfechas”, dijo Eljuri, quien destacó que este indicador también evidenció un “muy importante” retroceso.

La pobreza general estructural se ubicó un 23,6 por ciento, significativamente menor al 31,2 por ciento de hace un año, dijo.

Asimismo, la pobreza extrema

estructural bajó hasta un 7,9 por ciento, desde el 13 por ciento con que empezó el año pasado.

El INE mide además la llamada “pobreza crónica”, grupo en el que incluye a aquellos que son pobres tanto en la medición a partir de los ingresos como la de satisfacción de necesidades. Esa pobreza crónica se ubicaba en 23,7 por ciento en 2003, cuando comenzó a medirse el indicador, y cayó al 11,4 por ciento al cierre de 2008, afirmó Eljuri.

“Es decir, por cualquier de los dos métodos que estamos midiendo la pobreza vemos que ha disminuido”, resaltó el responsable del INE, que atribuyó el resultado a la importante inversión social del Gobierno “revolucionario” del presidente venezolano, Hugo Chávez.

Eljuri declaró que la bajada en los indicadores “no quiere decir que no hay pobreza en Venezuela, como muchos tratan de ridiculizar las cifras”

oficiales.

“Cuando decimos que por hogares la pobreza está en el 6 por ciento, hay alrededor de 2 millones de personas que están en pobreza extrema”.

Pero esas personas “están recibiendo una serie de servicios” a través de los diversos programas sociales desarrollados por el Gobierno “que no recibían antes” y que no contabilizan como ingreso per cápita, añadió.

“En este Gobierno la inversión social ha tenido una gran importancia y se ha incrementado de manera significativa. Un 45 por ciento del presupuesto nacional está destinado a gasto social en 2010”, aseguró Eljuri.

Los estratos pobres “están recibiendo muchos beneficios que inclusive no son captados por la línea de ingresos. Por ejemplo hay más de 4 millones de niños y niñas que comen sus tres comidas (al día) en las escuelas bolivarianas, lo que significa que esos hogares no tienen que gastar en esas comidas”, sostuvo. □

## Perú: Incineran más de cuatro toneladas de droga

LIMA (AP) - La policía incineró el viernes cuatro toneladas y media de droga incautada en diversas operaciones realizadas en el país.

La incineración del cargamento de pasta básica de cocaína, clorhidrato de cocaína, marihuana, amapola, látex de opio, clorhidrato de morfina y

heroína, se llevó a cabo en un horno especial en instalaciones de la Oficina Ejecutiva de Control de Drogas (Ofecod) en el distrito de Ate.

El ministro del Interior Octavio Salazar dijo que con los 4.507 kilogramos de estupefacientes

incinerados el viernes, el volumen total de droga destruida desde enero del año pasado suma 25,9 toneladas.

Perú es después de Colombia el segundo productor mundial de hoja de coca, materia prima de la cocaína. □



# Colombia: capturan banda de expertos en delitos informáticos

BOGOTA (AP) - La policía anunció el jueves la captura de seis presuntos expertos en delitos informáticos que se dedicaban a defraudar cuentas de diferentes entidades financieras a través de transacciones electrónicas.

El general César Pinzón, comandante de la policía metropolitana de Bogotá, dijo en rueda de prensa que la captura se realizó el miércoles en el barrio capitalino Los Cerezos sin que los acusados tuviera tiempo “de borrar o manipular la información que estaban conociendo”.

Pinzón dijo que los seis estaban conectados a la base de información del Banco Santander y de la Casa de Cambios Efecty.

La banda era liderada por Omar Ignacio Roso, alias “El Veneco”, natural de la ciudad venezolana de Barquisimeto, quien según la policía, cuando fue aprehendido, estaba conectado con servidores de empresas y entidades financieras de España, Argentina y Colombia.

Pinzón también dijo que en el operativo fue detenido Yezid Fredy Díaz, un analista de bolsa del City Bank. El banco en un comunicado dijo que Díaz, con 15 años de experiencia en el sector, “estaba finalizando su proceso de inducción a la compañía y aún no tenía acceso a información de clientes del banco”. □



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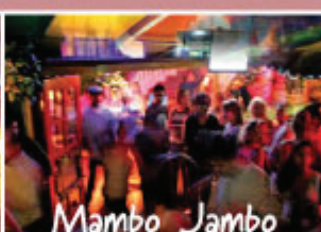
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